

- 3 **Action: Improve screening of utility installations adjacent to visitor center) propane tank on northwest side of visitor center, propane tank behind ZNHA shop, and dumpster south of visitor center).**



Positive Impacts

Painting the tanks and dumpster a gray/green color would reduce their visual impact. Planting of native shrubs would better reduce their visual presence in the viewshed.

Negative Impacts

Negative Impacts would be similar to those described elsewhere that involve minor site disturbance to install plantings

Side Bar 1

Rabbits

After discussion with USU wildlife ecologist F. Knowlton and range scientist F. Busby, we all agreed that what appears to be happening with herbivore on new PISP plantings is the “candy store phenomenon”. This occurs in landscapes that tend to have reduced supplies of forage or browse, often the result of historic overgrazing. When small scale restoration planting or controlled burns are used to restore the native species they become the “candy store”. Herbivores prey on these sites because they are concentrations of high quality forage or browses.

One solution would be to plant a diversity of warm season grasses and forbs in several locations in the monument. These species are just breaking dormancy when the first litters (usually the largest) or rabbits are born. Very little of the warm season species biomass is available to herbivores, hence damage to plants is limited. However, as pointed out by Knowlton, cottontail rabbit population explosions which occur in 10-15 year cycles in this shrub landscape are a complicating factor.

Rabbit exclosures can be effective, but they are expensive to install and rather unsightly, certainly not in character with the historic period. Rabbits could be live trapped and transported off the monument for release. This is a labor intensive and time consuming action. Further, the supply of potential immigrants from outside PISP is virtually endless, so live trapping would be an on-going activity. Maintaining a healthy population of natural predators such as coyote, fox, bobcat, and large raptors in the immediate region would suppress the population but is not possible unless support can be gained from the tribe to alter policies and practices of predator control. As noted earlier, eliminating lawn areas may also help reduce the population.

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